United Nations E/CN.6/2001/L.11

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
30 April 2001

Original: English

Commission on the Status of Women
Resumed forty-fifth session
9-11 May 2001
Agenda item 4 (a)
Thematic issues: Women, the girl child and human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syundrome (HIV/AIDS)

Draft agreed conclusions submitted by the Chairperson on the basis of informal consultations

Women, the girl child and human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS)

1. Women play a vital role in the social and economic development of their countries. It is a profound concern that by the end of 2000, 36.1 million people were living with HIV/AIDS, and of those infected, 95 per cent were living in developing countries, and 16.4 million were women. The proportion of women infected with HIV is increasing and in sub-Saharan Africa women constitute 55 per cent of all adult HIV infected, while teenage girls are infected at a rate of five to six times greater than their male counterparts; (AGREED)

2. **[[Full enjoyment of all human rights by women and girls, including the right to development, is of crucial importance in preventing further spread of HIV/AIDS.]** The majority of women and girls, do not **fully** enjoy **equal,** social, economic **and cultural rights [in equal conditions with men], [particularly]** to education, **the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and social security, especially in developing countries,** and these inequalities begin early in life and render women and girls **more vulnerable in the area of** sexual and reproductive health; thus increasing their risk and vulnerability to HIV infection and therefore suffer disproportionately from the consequences of the HIV/AIDS epidemic;]

01-35583 (E) 030501

New 2:

Full enjoyment by women and girls of all human rights, civil, cultural, economic, political and social, including the right to development – which are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, is of crucial importance in preventing further spread of HIV/AIDS. The majority of women and girls, do not fully enjoy their rights particularly to education, the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and social security, especially in developing countries. These inequalities begin early in life and render women and girls more vulnerable in the area of sexual and reproductive health; thus increasing their risk and vulnerability to HIV infection and their disproportionate suffering from the consequences of the HIV/AIDS epidemic; (27/04/01, AGREED AD REFERENDUM)

3. Poverty, negative and harmful traditional and customary practices that subordinate women in the household, community and society render women especially vulnerable to HIV/STI. Millions of women and girls lack access and/or have insufficient access to health care, medication and social support in general, including in the case of sexually transmitted infections/ HIV/AIDS; (AGREED)

4. The Commission on the Status of Women has taken into account the recommendations on women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS as addressed in the following documents: the Beijing Platform for Action,[1] the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development[2]; the Copenhagen Programme of Action[3], the outcome documents of the 21st, 23rd and 24th special sessions of the United Nations General Assembly[4], the United Nations Millennium Declaration,5 the Commission on the Status of Women's Agreed conclusion on women and health[6], its resolution 44/2 ; (AGREED)

---

1 See *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13)

2 See *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5–13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18)

3 *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8)

4 See General Assembly resolutions S-21/2 of 2 July 1999, S-23/2 of 10 June 2000 and S-24/2 of 1 July 2000

5 General Assembly resolutions 55/2

6 ECOSOC resolution 1999/17

5. **[The CSW recalls the internationally agreed targets as contained in the documents referred to in para. 4 and suggests that the outcome document of the UNGASS on HIV/AIDS should fully integrate a gender perspective, including in any new targets and focus on actions needed to achieve existing targets;]** (27/04/01)

6. **[It is important to** [fully integrate/take into account] **a gender perspective** [in the preparatory process and] **in the outcome document of the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, to be held from 25 to 27 June 2001. In order to** [strengthen the fight against HIV/AIDS in women and girls through the acceleration of/accelerate] **the implementation of the strategic objectives of chapter IV.C of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly, the following actions should be taken:**]

New 6:

It is important to fully integrate a gender perspective in the preparatory process and in the outcome document of the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, including, *inter alia*, the full integration of a gender perspective in any new targets and in actions needed to achieve existing targets, **[the following actions should be taken:]** (27/04/01, TO BE MOVED BEFORE CURRENT PARAGRAPH 10)

7. **[Welcomes the convening of the OAU Special Summit on HIV/AIDS in Abuja, Nigeria, April 2001 and the United Nations special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS in June 2001 emphasizing that a gender perspective should be [fully integrated in their preparatory process and] their outcome documents;]**

New 7:
Welcomes the convening of the OAU Special Summit on HIV/AIDS in Abuja, Nigeria, April 2001 and recommends that a gender perspective be fully integrated in its preparatory process and outcome documents; (27/04/01, AGREED AD REFERENDUM)

8. The Commission notes with appreciation the efforts of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and its co-sponsors, bilateral and multilateral donors, governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in their efforts to

empower women through capacity development programmes, as well as programmes that provide women with access to development resources and strengthen their networks which offer care and support to women affected by HIV/AIDS; (AGREED)

9. The highest level of political commitment to the empowerment and advancement of women and to the prevention, research, care and treatment of sexually transmitted infections, especially HIV/AIDS, must be secured; (AGREED)

10. In order to accelerate the implementation of the strategic objectives of the conferences and documents previously mentioned in para 3, especially of those objectives related to women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS, the Commission recommends that the following actions be taken: (AGREED)

Actions to be taken by Governments, the United Nations system and civil society, as appropriate

1. Empowerment of women

(a) The rapid progression of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, particularly in the developing world, has had a devastating impact on women. The unequal power relationships between women and men, in which women often do not have the power to insist on safe and responsible sex practices, and lack of communication and understanding between women and men on women's health needs, *inter alia*, endanger women's health, particularly by increasing their susceptibility to sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS; (AGREED)

(b) Responsible behaviour and gender equality are among the important prerequisites for its prevention; (AGREED)

(c) Further promote the advancement and empowerment of women and **[women's full enjoyment of all human rights, including the right to development] and [their right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality],** as well as access to health information and education, health care and health services which are critical to increase the ability of women and young girls to protect themselves from HIV infection; (27/04/01)

(d) Ensure that the sexual health and reproductive rights of women of all ages as defined-in paragraphs 94, 95 and 96 of the Beijing Platform for Action is an essential part in efforts to promote women's empowerment; (27/04/01, AGREED AD REFERENDUM)

(e) Focus national and international policies towards the eradication of poverty in order to empower women to better protect themselves from the spread of the pandemic and to more effectively deal with the adverse effects of HIV/AIDS; (AGREED)

(f) Alleviate the social and economic impact of HIV/AIDS on women who in their roles as food suppliers and traditional care givers are primarily affected by negative consequences of the pandemic like reduced labour force and breakdown of social service systems; (AGREED)

(g) Reaffirms the equal rights of women and the girl child infected and affected by sexually transmitted infections/HIV/AIDS to have access to health, education and social services and to be protected from all forms of discrimination, stigma, abuse and neglect; (AGREED)

(h) Also reaffirms the human rights of girls and women to equal access to education, skill training and employment opportunities as a means to reduce their vulnerability to sexually transmitted diseases/HIV; (AGREED)

(i) Urges Governments to take all necessary measures to empower women and strengthen women's economic independence and protect and promote full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in order to allow women and girls to better protect themselves from sexually transmitted infections/HIV; (AGREED)

(j) Address and reduce the increased HIV/AIDS risks, vulnerabilities, and impact on women and girls, including in conflict situations, through gender-sensitive economic, legal and social services and programmes, including integration of HIV/AIDS prevention and care services into minimum essential health care packages; (AGREED)

(k) Strengthen concrete measures to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, including harmful traditional and customary practices, abuse and rape, battering, and

trafficking in women and girls, which aggravate the conditions fostering the spread of HIV/AIDS, through, *inter alia*, the enactment and enforcement of laws, as well as public campaigns to combat violence against women and girls; (AGREED)

(l) Take steps to create an environment, that promotes all human rights, compassion and support for people infected/affected by HIV/AIDS, including through introducing and/or reviewing legislation with a view to striving to remove discriminatory provisions and provide the legal framework that will protect the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS, particularly of women and girls, and enable those who are vulnerable to have access to appropriate voluntary and confidential counselling services and to encourage efforts to reduce discrimination and stigmatization; (AGREED)

(m) Further develop and fully integrate a gender perspective into national regional and international HIV/AIDS programmes and strategies taking into account, *inter alia*, sex and age disaggregated data and statistics, with a particular focus on gender equality; (AGREED)

(n) Take measures to promote and implement women's equal access to and control over economic resources, including land, property rights, right to inheritance, regardless of their marital status in order to reduce the vulnerability of women in the context of the HIV/AIDS epidemic; (AGREED)

(o) Provide women and girls, including those in marginalized groups, with equal access to quality education, literacy programmes, health care and health services, social services, skills training and employment opportunities, and support capacity-building and the strengthening of women's networks and protect them from all forms of discrimination, including racial discrimination, stigma, abuse and neglect in order to reduce their risk and vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and alleviate the impact on those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS; (AGREED)

2. Prevention

(a) Governments, relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, individually and collectively, should make efforts to place combating HIV/AIDS as a priority on the development

agenda and to implement multi-sectoral and decentralized effective preventive strategies and programmes, especially for the most vulnerable populations, including women, young girls and infants, also taking into account prevention of mother-to-child transmission; (AGREED)

(b) Governments, with the assistance of relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, must adopt a long-term, timely, coherent and integrated AIDS prevention policy, with public information, life skills-based education programmes specifically tailored to the needs of women and girls adapted to their social cultural context and sensitivities and the specific needs in their life cycle; (AGREED)

(c) Intensify efforts to determine the best policies and programmes to prevent women and young girls from becoming infected with HIV/AIDS, taking into account that women, in particular young girls, are socially, physiologically and biologically more vulnerable than men to sexually transmitted infections; (AGREED)

(d) **[Recognizing that various forms of the family exist, take measures to integrate a [family-based approach/families in all its forms] as part of programmes aiming at providing prevention, care and support to women of all ages/people infected/affected by HIV/AIDS;]**

New (d)

Take measures to integrate, *inter alia,* a family-based approach in programmes aiming at providing prevention, care and support to women and girls infected and affected by HIV/AIDS; (27/04/01, AGREED AD REFERENDUM)

(e) Ensure equal and non-discriminatory access to accurate, comprehensive **[and culturally sensitive]** information, to prevention education on reproductive health, and to voluntary testing and counselling services and technologies within a gender-sensitive framework and with particular emphasis on adolescents and young adults; **[taking into account, where appropriate, the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents and legal guardians to provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child, appropriate**

directions and guidance [in the exercise by the child of the rights recognized in the Convention on the Rights of the Child;]]

New (e)

Ensure equal and non discriminatory access to accurate, comprehensive information, to prevention education on reproductive health, and to voluntary testing and counselling services and technologies within a culture and gender-sensitive framework and with particular emphasis on adolescents and young adults; (27/04/01, AGREED AD REFERENDUM)

(f) [Request the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and its co-sponsors to continue in their efforts at providing complete and accurate/promoting gender sensitive, **[culturally sensitive]** sexual and reproductive health education for young people, while, *inter alia*, encouraging them to delay sexual initiation, or/and to use condoms and, in this context, urge that greater attention be given to the education of men and boys about their roles and their responsibilities in preventing the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, to their partners;] (27/04/01)

(g) Promote gender equality in relationships, and provide information and resources to promote informed, responsible and safe sexual behaviour and practices, mutual respect and gender equality in sexual relationships; (AGREED)

(h) **[All forms of media should] [Recognizing the importance of ….. /Take actions to encourage all electronic and print/forms of media to]** Promote **[the use of]** non-discriminatory and gender sensitive images and a culture of non-violence and of respect of all human rights **[and particularly women's rights] [in addressing HIV/AIDS]**; (27/04/01)

(i) Encourage active involvement of men and boys through, *inter alia*, youth-led and youth-specific HIV education projects and peer-based programmes, in challenging gender stereotypes and attitudes as well as gender inequalities in relation to HIV and AIDS, as well as their full participation in prevention, impact alleviation and care. Design and implement programmes to encourage and enable men to adopt safe and responsible sexual

and reproductive behaviour and to use effectively methods to prevent unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS; (AGREED)

(j) Intensify especially in the most affected countries, education, services, community-based mobilization and information strategies to protect women of all ages from HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, including through the development of safe, affordable, effective and easily accessible female-controlled methods, including such methods as microbicides and female condoms that protect against sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS, as well as voluntary and confidential HIV testing and counselling and the promotion of sexually responsible behaviour, including abstinence and condom use; (AGREED)

(k) Strengthen sustainable, efficient and accessible primary health care systems which serve to support prevention efforts; (AGREED)

(l) Special attention should be given to the prevention of HIV, particularly with regard to mother-to-child transmission and for victims of rape – on the basis of informed consent and voluntary and confidential testing, counselling and treatment – including through **[ensuring/striving to ensure]** access to care and improving the quality and availability of affordable drugs and diagnostics, especially anti-retroviral therapies, and by building on existing efforts, with special attention given to the issue of breastfeeding; (27/04/01)

(m) Strive to ensure that schools at all levels, other education institutions, and non-formal systems of education play a leading role in preventing HIV infection, preventing and combating stigmatization and discrimination through the provision of an environment free of all forms of violence, that promotes compassion and tolerance, and provide gender-sensitive education, including on responsible sexual behaviour, and practices, life skills and behaviour change. (27/04/01, AGREED AD REFERENDUM) **[Sex education should/could be integrated into school curricula for adolescents] [when applicable] [,where necessary, respecting their cultural values and religious beliefs;]** (27/04/01)

(n) Work together with civil society, including traditional, community, religious leaders to identify the customary and traditional practices that adversely influence gender relations,

and to eliminate those practices that increase the vulnerability of women and girls to HIV/AIDS; (27/04/01, AGREED AD REFERENDUM)

Alternative (n) (27/04/01, DELETED AD REFERENDUM)

(o) **[Governments, the international organizations, including relevant UN organizations, and civil society should bear in mind the core values and practices of the cultures and religions concerned in HIV/AIDS education, including sex education, prevention, treatment and care;]** (27/04/01)

3. **Treatment, care and support**

(a) Request Governments to ensure universal and equal access for women and men throughout their life cycle, to social services related to health care, including education, clean water and safe sanitation, nutrition, food security and health education programmes, especially for women and girls living with and affected by HIV/AIDS, including treatment for opportunistic diseases; (AGREED)

(b) Work to provide comprehensive health care for women and girls living with HIV/AIDS, including dietary and food supplements and treatment for opportunistic infections and full, equal, non-discriminatory and prompt access to health care and health services, including sexual and reproductive health, voluntary and confidential counselling, taking into account the rights of the Child to access to information, privacy, confidentiality, respect and informed consent and the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents and legal guardians; (27/04/01, AGREED AD REFERENDUM)
[and also strengthen/ensure prevention and treatment to accelerate access to care and improve the quality, affordability and availability of drugs and diagnostics, including anti-retroviral therapies in places accessible to women and girls while ensuring their privacy;] (27/04/01);

Alternative (b) (27/04/01, DELETED AD REFERENDUM)

(c) Care and support for people living with HIV/AIDS, particularly women and girls, should have a comprehensive approach involving medical, social, psychological, spiritual and economic needs, targeting the community and national level; (AGREED)

(d) Collaborate to strengthen efforts to create an environment and the conditions necessary, with the assistance of relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and intergovernmental and non governmental organizations upon request, to address the challenges faced by women and girls infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, particularly orphans and widows, girls and older women who may also be primary caregivers for people living with HIV/AIDS, all of whom are particularly vulnerable to both economic and sexual exploitation; provide them with the necessary economic and psycho-social support and encourage their economic independence through income-generating programmes and other methods; (27/04/01, AGREED AD REFERENDUM)

(e) Provide support for the implementation of special programmes for the growing problems of children orphaned by AIDS, especially girls who may easily become victims of sexual exploitation; (AGREED)

(f) **[[Increase access to and affordability of /Ensure that strategies] [focused on/employed in] the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS [are accessible and affordable] for all women and girls, as poverty is one of the greatest challenges facing women and girls seeking support;]** (27/04/01)

4. Enabling environment for regional and international cooperation

(a) **[Urges the international community, relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to provide [adequate/additional and sufficient resources] to intensify their support to national efforts [to accelerate access to care and] to improve the quality [affordability and availability] of [affordable] drugs and diagnostics, including anti-retroviral therapies against HIV/AIDS [including efforts at providing affordable anti-retroviral drugs], particularly in favour of women and young girls, especially in the worst-hit regions and where the epidemic is severely setting back national development gains;]**

New 4 (a):

[Calls upon the international community, relevant agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to intensify their support of national efforts against HIV/AIDS, particularly in favour of women and young girls, including efforts at providing affordable anti-retroviral drugs; reliable distribution and delivery systems; implementation of a strong generic drug policy; bulk purchasing; negotiation with pharmaceutical companies; appropriate financing systems; and encouragement of local manufacturing and import practices consistent with national laws and international agreements, and particularly in the worst hit regions in Africa and where the epidemic is severely setting back national development gains.] (27/04/01)

(b) Take action to eradicate poverty which is a major contributory factor for the spread of HIV infection and worsens the impact of the epidemic, particularly for women and girls, as well as depleting resources and incomes of families and endangering the survival of present and future generations; (AGREED)

(c) **[Identify and implement development-oriented and durable solutions which integrate a gender perspective to external debt and debt servicing problems of developing countries, including least developed countries, *inter alia*, through debt relief, including the option of ODA debt cancellation] [Calls upon the international community to take actions to alleviate the burden of external debt of and debt-servicing by highly indebted developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, [through debt cancellation] and other appropriate measures in order to enhance the utilization of resources in the delivery of quality health care services and the provision of preventive programmes on HIV/AIDS, especially targeting women and girls;]**

New (c)

[Identify and implement development-oriented and durable solutions which integrate a gender perspective to external debt and debt-servicing problems of developing countries,

including least developed countries, *inter alia*, through debt relief, including the option of ODA debt cancellation, in order to help them to finance programmes and projects targeted at development, including the advancement of women, enhancing the utilization of resources in the delivery of quality health care and health services and the provision of preventive programmes on HIV/AIDS, especially targeting women and girls; Support the Cologne initiative for the reduction of debt, particularly the speedy implementation of the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiatives; ensure the provision of adequate funds for its implementation and implement the provision that funds saved should be used to support anti-poverty programmes that address gender dimensions.] (27/04/01)

(d) Ensure international, regional and South-South cooperation, including development assistance and additional adequate resources to implement gender-sensitive policies and programmes aimed at halting the spread of the epidemic in providing affordable quality treatment and care of all people, especially women and girls living with AIDS; (27/04/01, AGREED AD REFERENDUM)

(e) (27/04/01, DELETED AD REFERENDUM)

(f) Encourage the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and its co-sponsors, bilateral and multilateral donors and intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations, to intensify their support to empower women and prevent HIV infection, to give urgent and priority attention to the situation of women and girls especially in Africa, in particular through the International Partnership against AIDS in Africa; (AGREED)

(g) Increase investment in research on the development of HIV vaccines, microbicides and other female controlled methods, simpler and less expensive diagnostic tests, single-dose treatments for sexually transmitted infections and **[affordable/low-cost]** drug combinations, as well as alternative medicine for HIV/AIDS, focusing on the needs of women and girls; (27/04/01)

(h) Support and assist research and development centres particularly at the national level, in the worst-hit regions with a gender specific focus, in the field of vaccines and treatment

for HIV/AIDS, as well as support the efforts by governments in building and/or strengthening their national capacities in this areas; (AGREED)

(i) Develop and implement as well as strengthen already existing training programmes for law enforcement officers, prison officers, medical officers and judicial personnel, as well as UN personnel, including peacekeeping staff, to be more sensitive and responsive to the needs of threatened and abused women and children infected with HIV/AIDS, including intravenous drug users, female inmates and orphans; (AGREED)

(j) Ensure that the needs of girls and women in relation to HIV/AIDS in all situations of conflict, post-conflict, peace-keeping and in the immediate and reconstructive responses to emergencies and natural disasters are addressed; (AGREED)

(k) Provide gender sensitive prevention and treatment services for female substance abusers living with HIV/AIDS; (AGREED)

(l) Provide technical and financial support to networks of people living with HIV/AIDS, NGOs and community based organizations involved in implementing HIV/AIDS programmes, particularly women's groups, in order to strengthen their efforts; (AGREED)

(m) **[Take measures to increase the availability/Further reduce the cost]** of key pharmaceutical and anti-retroviral therapies to treat HIV/AIDS and to reach an affordable **and sustainable** cost in particular for women and girls in developing countries;] (27/04/01)

Alternative (m)

[Adopt a balanced approach to prevention and comprehensive care and support for women and girls with HIV/AIDS which includes ongoing discussions among Governments, relevant international organizations, and relevant actors from civil society to [enhance/improve/accelerate/ensure] access to care and improve the quality, availability of affordable drugs and diagnostics, including anti-retroviral therapies;] (27/04/01)

(n) Urge relevant UN entities to incorporate a gender perspective into their follow-up and evaluation of the progress made on the control of sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS; (AGREED)

(o) **[Commends UNAIDS for its advocacy in successfully accelerating both increased prevention and improved access to care, and urges Governments to enter into negotiations with those multinational drug companies which have already offered further drastic reduction in market prices of HIV/AIDS related drugs and diagnostics to ensure availability, affordability and sustainability to women and girls living with HIV/AIDS]/[Urges Governments and the international community to continue advocating, lobbying and enter into negotiations with multinational drug companies for drastic reduction in market prices of HIV/AIDS related drugs and diagnostics to ensure availability, affordability and sustainability to women and girls living with HIV/AIDS.]**